

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A non-invasive patient immobilisation assembly for immobilising a body part of a patient and for at least temporarily fixing the position thereof, wherein the immobilisation assembly comprises a rigid template (1) made of a thermoplastic material, which template is thermoformed or otherwise moulded in such a way that the inner surface conforms to and contacts the body part to be immobilised along a contact surface area between the template and the body part, which contact surface area corresponds to at least part of the inner surface of the template, wherein the immobilisation assembly also comprises a fixation plate (3, 12, 13) and connecting means (10, 11, 14, 15, 16) for connecting the template (1) to the fixation plate (3, 12, 13) in view of fixing the position of the template and the body part with respect to the fixation plate, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the template (1) is provided to exert a fixation force of a preset value to the body part covered by it along the contact surface area, by exerting a pulling force pulling the body part towards the fixation plate (3, 12, 13) with the aim of restraining the displacement of the body part within the template within defined limits, the assembly further comprising means (5, 6, 7, 17, 18) for adjusting the fixation force exerted by the template to the preset value.

2. (Currently Amended) An assembly as claimed in claim 1 ,
~~characterised in that wherein~~ the fixation force exerted by the template is
about 75-200 N, preferably 100-150 N.

3. (Currently Amended) An assembly as claimed in claim 1 or 2,
~~characterised in that, wherein~~ the means for adjusting the fixation force
are adjustable in a continuous or discontinuous manner.

4. (Currently Amended) An assembly as claimed in ~~any one of~~
~~claims 1-3, characterised in that claim 3, wherein~~ the means for adjusting
the fixation force are adapted to provide for a stepwise adjustment of the
fixation force.

5. (Currently Amended) An assembly as claimed in ~~any one of~~
~~claims 1-4, characterised in that claim 1, wherein~~ the template (1)
comprises at least one edge (14), ~~in that wherein~~ the connecting means
(10) connecting the template (1) to the fixation plate (3, 12, 13) are
connected to the at least one edge (14, 15, 16), and ~~in that wherein~~ the
pulling force is exerted to the at least one edge of the template.

6. (Currently Amended) An assembly as claimed in ~~any one of~~
~~claims 1-5, characterised in that claim 1, wherein~~ the means (5, 6, 7, 17,
18) for adjusting the pulling force exerted by the template (1) comprise
means for varying the distance between the template and the body part
to be immobilised.

7. (Currently Amended) An assembly as claimed in ~~any one of~~ claims 1–6, characterised in ~~that~~ claim 6, wherein the means (5, 6, 7, 17, 18) for adjusting the pulling force comprise means for displacing the template (1) with respect to the body part, in view of varying the distance of the template with respect to the body part to be immobilised.

8. (Currently Amended) An assembly as claimed in ~~any one of~~ claims 1–7, characterised in ~~that~~ claim 1, wherein the fixation plate (3, 12, 13) comprises a top surface (12) and bottom surface (13), ~~in that~~ wherein the template is connected to the top surface (12), and ~~in that~~ wherein means (6, 7) are provided for moving the top surface with respect to the bottom surface.

9. (Currently Amended) An assembly as claimed in ~~any one of~~ claims 1–8, characterised in ~~that~~ claim 1, wherein the fixation plate (3, 12, 13) comprises a top surface (12) and bottom surface (13), ~~in that~~ wherein the template is connected to the bottom surface (13), and ~~in that~~ wherein means (6, 7) are provided for moving the bottom surface (13) with respect to the top surface (12).

10. (Currently Amended) An assembly as claimed in ~~any one of~~ claims 1–9, characterised in ~~that~~ claim 1, wherein the assembly comprises a support (2), the support being provided for positioning on top of the fixation plate (3, 12, 13) in view of supporting the body part to be immobilised, and ~~in that~~ wherein the means for adjusting the fixation

force comprise means for varying the position of the support (2) with respect to the template (1).

11. (Currently Amended) An assembly as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1—9, characterised in that claim 1, wherein~~ the assembly comprises a support (2) for supporting the body part to be treated, the support (2) being positioned independently of the fixation plate (3), and ~~in that wherein~~ the means for adjusting the fixation force comprise means for varying the position of the support (2) with respect to the template (1) and/or the fixation plate (3).

12. (Cancel)

13. (Currently Amended) An assembly as claimed in ~~claim 12—14, characterised in that wherein~~ the device comprises a head and neck support (2) for supporting the head and neck of a patient.

14. (New) A non-invasive immobilisation assembly for immobilising a head of a patient and for at least temporarily fixing the position thereof, wherein the immobilisation assembly comprises a rigid template (1) made of a thermoplastic material, which template is thermoformed or otherwise moulded in such a way that the inner surface conforms to and contacts at least part of the head to be immobilised along a contact surface area between the template and at least part of the head, which contact surface area corresponds to at least part of the inner surface of the template, wherein the immobilisation assembly also

comprises a fixation plate (3, 12, 13) and connecting means (10, 11, 14, 15, 16) for connecting the template (1) to the fixation plate (3, 12, 13) in view of fixing the position of the template and the head with respect to the fixation plate, wherein the template (1) is provided to exert a fixation force of a preset value to the part of the head covered by it along the contact surface area, by exerting a pulling force pulling the head towards the fixation plate (3, 12, 13) with the aim of restraining the displacement of the head within the template within defined limits, the assembly further comprising means (5, 6, 7, 17, 18) for adjusting the fixation force exerted by the template to the preset value.